Remarks/Arguments

Specification

The Examiner objected to the Abstract due to the presence of improper terminology. Applicant has provided a replacement Abstract free of language such as "means" and other removes expressions that that the Examiner deemed unclear.

The specification has also been amended to eliminate incidences of single reference numerals being used for multiple elements. Specifically, appropriate corrections were made to paragraphs [0071] and [0072] to have reference numeral 110 refer only to the armature, and reference numeral 2 now refers only to the base. Therefore, the replacement paragraphs [0071] and [0072] offer suitable correction and clarification. The changes are fully supported by the original specification and no new matter has been added.

The Rejection of Claims 16, 17, 19-25 and 27 Under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected Claims 16, 17, 19, 20-25 and 27 Under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Specifically, the Examiner cited the use of "said means of bearing" in Claim 16 and "mutual approaching" in Claim 20 fails to recite sufficient structural elements and interconnection of the elements. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 16 has been cancelled which renders the rejection of Claim 16 moot.

Claim 17 has been amended to be dependent on Claim 1 which clearly explains the movement of the first and second support means to approach and move away from each other.

Claim 20 now has language that clearly explains that the actuating means is disposed on the pallet, and that the actuating means is suitable for causing the first and second support means to move towards and/or move away from each other. Claim 20 does not specify which support means moves, only that the actuator causes the two support means to move toward or away from each other. As it is currently worded there is sufficient clarity to enable one to understand that the actuator causes the two support means to move toward or away from each other. The claim is drafted to be broad enough to encompass a device that has either 1) the first support means

moving toward or away from the second support means, and the second support means stationary; 2) the second support means moving toward or away from the first support means, and the first means stationary; or 3) both support means moving toward and away from each other simultaneously. The current wording of Claims 17, 19-25 and 27 is no longer indefinite. The language of these claims particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Rejection of Claims 1, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24 and 27 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,735,219 (Kirker). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Applicant has cancelled Claim 16 rendering the rejection of that claim moot. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the "means for supporting comprise at least a first and a second support means capable of approaching and/or moving away from each other in a substantially axial direction with respect to the armature axis **at the moment of receiving and/or releasing a portion of said armature**."

Kirker does not teach means for supporting that **move at the moment of receiving and/or releasing** a portion of an armature. Kirker discloses an adjustable pallet with support means 36 and 44 which can move, but they are **not** designed to move at the moment when the pallet is receiving or releasing a portion of an armature. The support means recited in Claim 1, which are capable of moving at the moment of receiving or releasing a portion of an armature, is a significant limitation. Without support means that can move at the moment of receiving or releasing an armature other portions of the armature could not be received or released on the pallet, neither could armatures with hidden shafts. Movement of the support means at the time of receipt or removal of the armature affords the pallet the capability of being used with armatures with hidden shafts, unusually short shafts, or armatures that are required to be held at location other than the shaft. In the manufacture of electric motors it is occasionally necessary to hold armatures at locations other than the shaft. The support means recited in Claim 1, which can

move at the point of receiving or releasing the armature, is capable of accomplishing that task. The pallet described by Kirker is not.

Armatures shafts can be exposed or at least a portion of the shaft can be hidden by wire coils or the armature. The support means taught by Kirker would be incapable of receiving hidden shafts since the support means do not move at the moment of receiving or releasing the shaft, and with hidden shafts the best possible way to receive or release them from the pallet is by moving the support means at the moment of receipt or release.

Conventional pallets, like that taught by Kirker, utilize support members that are incapable of moving at the point of receiving or releasing an armature. Such support means need to be adjusted manually to compensate for different armatures, or different stages in the manufacturing process. While one of the support means of Kirker is adjustable, both support means in Kirker are stationary during the manufacture of armatures and can only be adjusted at times when production is halted. Kirker explicitly describes the importance of keeping the supports stationary during manufacture stating that "once adjusted to that particular position on carriage rod 16, **spring 30 inhibits support member 12 from moving** while the work piece is being worked upon or transported on pallet 10." (Col. 4, lines 60-63). If a different portion of an armature must be received, or an armature with a hidden shaft must be received, the Kirker device can not be used. Support members that move at the moment of receiving or releasing the armature do not need any manual adjustment to receive or release different size armatures. Nor do they need manual adjustment of the support means to accommodate different armatures. The support means of Claim 1 can adjust in real time to the situation is faces. Therefore, the support members taught in Claim 1 are not anticipated by Kirker, since Kirker fails to teach support means that move at the moment of receiving or releasing the armature.

For all the reasons above, Kirker does not teach all the elements of Claim 1, therefore, Claim 1 is novel. Claims 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24 and 27, dependent from Claim 1, enjoy the same distinction from the cited prior art. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claims 1, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24 and 27 be withdrawn.

Claim 20

Also missing from Kirker is any teaching of an actuating device that enables the support means to move away from or toward each other. Kirker has no mechanism even remotely related to the movement of the support members 12 and 14. Two springs 30 and 32 are described as a means **to prevent movement of support 12** by way of a frictional engagement between the springs and rods 16 and 18. This teaching runs contrary to the actuating means recited in Claim 20. There is no teaching or suggestion of an actuating means that moves the support means. Consequently, all the limitations of Claim 20 have not been taught or suggested by Kirker and Claim 20 is novel. Applicant requests that rejection be withdrawn and Claim 20 be passed to allowance.

Claim 22

Claim 22 recites an elongated portion on the support means, which moves in a substantially axial direction, inserts into a space between the coils and the shaft of the armature. The support means taught in Kirker do not include such an elongated portion. Nor does Kirker teach a support means that has an element that can be inserted into a space between the coils of the armature and the shaft of the armature, whether that element on the support means be an elongated portion or any other shape. This elongated portion that inserts in a space between the coils and the shaft of the armature is significant since it can be used to hold various armatures that the support means of Kirker and the like can not hold. For instance, the elongated portion offers the possibility that pallet can carry armatures having a portion of the shaft hidden between the coils and the armature stack. (see paragraph 74 and Figures 27-30). Couple this feature with the fact that the support means move at a moment of receiving and releasing the armature, and this pallet has limitations that are not taught or suggested by Kirker. Also, it is evident that the pallet recited in Claim 22 has distinct advantages over the style of pallet taught in Kirker. Therefore, Kirker does not teach all the elements of Claim 22 and that claim is novel, and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Rejection of Claims 21, 25, 28 and 30 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 21, 25, 28 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kirker. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claim 21 and 25

In arguments *supra* regarding the novelty of Claim 1, it was shown that all of the elements of Claim 1 were not taught by Kirker. In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness all limitations of the claim must be taught or suggested. All the limitations of Claim 1 have not been taught or suggested by Kirker. Specifically, support means that move at the moment of receiving or releasing a portion of an armature are not taught or suggested by Kirker. Kirker does not discuss the proposition of hidden shafts or how to deal with the palletizing armatures with such shafts. Nor does Kirker discuss the movement of the support members as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, the limitation reciting that the support means move at the moment of receiving or releasing an armature shaft is not taught or suggested by Kirker. Due to its dependency on Claim 1, Claims 21 and 25 have all the limitations of Claim 1, which is patentable. Therefore, Claims 21 and 25 are also patentable. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 28

The method recited in Claim 28 now recites the limitation of Claim 30, which recites that "support means capable of approaching and/or moving away from each other with respect to the axis of said armature at the moment of receiving and/or releasing a portion thereof." The arguments supra relating to the novelty and obviousness of support means that move at the moment of receiving or releasing an armature on the pallet are not repeated, but relied on to establish the patentability of Claim 28. Kirker's lack of teaching or suggestion for support means as recited in Claim 28 renders this claim patentable. Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim 30

Claim 30 has been cancelled, rendering this rejection moot.

New Claims

Claim 31

New Claim 31 has been included to recite support members with an elongated portion that can receive and engage a hidden shaft on an electric motor armature, and that move at the moment of receiving or releasing the hidden shaft. The structure recited in Claim 31 is described in paragraph [0074] on pages 16 and 17 of the original specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicant relies on the arguments *supra* regarding the patentability of the contents of Claim 31. Particularly, support means that move at the moment of receiving or releasing an armature. Furthermore, Kirker fails to teach or suggest support means with an elongated portion that are capable of receiving hidden shaft portions in an axial direction. The support means taught in Kirker have a mouth and trough that provide a structure that can receive an exposed shaft, but hidden shafts on an armature can not be received by the support means taught in Kirker. Furthermore, different portions of the armature can not be held by the support means taught by Kirker, unlike the device of Claim 31. Consequently, the two limitations: 1) support means that move at the moment of receiving or releasing an armature and 2) a support means that can receive and engage a hidden shaft on an armature, are not taught or suggested by Kirker. Therefore, Claim 31 recites patentable subject matter. Applicant requests that the Examiner pass the claim to allowance.

Claim 32

Claim 32 has been added and this claim recites support members that move at the moments of receiving or releasing the armature using an actuating device. Both the capability of the support members to move at the moment of releasing or receiving a portion of the armature, and the capability of the actuating means to accomplish that movement are untaught by Kirker. The claim is fully supported by the original specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Kirker discloses a pallet with support means that can be adjusted, but the support means are stationary during the use of the pallet, i.e., they can not move at the moment of receiving or

releasing a portion of the armature. (See arguments *supra* regarding the failure of Kirker to be a teaching or enabling reference for a pallet with support members that move at the moment of receiving or releasing).

Also missing from Kirker is any teaching or suggestion of an actuating device that enables the support means to move away from or toward each other. Kirker has no mechanism even remotely related to the movement of the support members 12 and 14. Two springs 30 and 32 are described as a means **to prevent movement of support 12** by way of a frictional engagement between the springs and rods 16 and 18. However, there is no teaching or suggestion of an actuating means that moves the support means. Consequently, all the limitations of Claim 32 have not been taught or suggested by Kirker and the claim recites allowable subject matter. Applicant requests that the Examiner pass the claim to allowance.

Claim 33

Applicant has followed the recommendation of Examiner Chen that was offered in the previous Office Action and has rewritten Claim 23 in independent fashion including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Also, the claim language has been amended to address the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The resulting claim is Claim 33. New Claim 33 is fully supported by the original specification. Therefore, no new matter has been added. Applicant requests that the Examiner pass the claim to allowance.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, which action is courteously requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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